



E-NEWS from *Congresswoman Jennifer Dunn*

An electronic legislative update for March 26, 2003.

Operation Iraqi Freedom



"As Operation Iraqi Freedom intensifies, so do America's prayers for the safety of our troops and for the innocent Iraqi people who are involved in this conflict."

"It was my hope that Saddam Hussein would be as committed to avoiding this conflict as the US government has been. But there is no doubt that Saddam Hussein is a direct threat to the United States and the rest of the world. Despite dozens of diplomatic efforts over the course of a dozen years, he continued to defy the world community, refused to disarm, and was untruthful about the weapons of mass destruction he possesses."

"It comes as no surprise that we have evidence that the Iraqi military is beginning to use the very weapons Saddam Hussein has denied possessing."

"I fully support the coalition effort to disarm Iraq, rid the world of an oppressive dictator and free the Iraqi people from the torture they have endured for almost three decades."

"We know this conflict will require a long-term commitment from the US and our allies. But eliminating this real threat and creating a more peaceful world for all is worth the effort."

Congresswoman Jennifer Dunn

JENNIFER'S AMBER ALERT LEGISLATION TO BE CONSIDERED BY US HOUSE THIS WEEK



(Photo courtesy of Tom Smart, Deseret News)

Following Elizabeth Smart's return to her family in Salt Lake City earlier this month, Elizabeth's father, Ed, called on Congress to immediately pass Jennifer's AMBER alert legislation. Jennifer recently appeared on several national television programs on CNN and MSNBC to discuss her AMBER alert legislation. For the past several months, Ed Smart has worked with Jennifer on her AMBER alert legislation.

Later this week, the US House is scheduled to consider the *Child Abduction Prevention Act*, which includes Jennifer's proposal to expand AMBER alert nationwide. Jennifer's legislation will make the AMBER alert available to all communities that choose to participate.

Statistics tell us that the first three hours after a child's abduction are critical to that child's safe return home. The AMBER alert has proven to be effective and is credited with helping to recover 53 children. Jennifer's legislation will make AMBER alert available to all communities that choose to initiate the program.

Jennifer's bill is included as part of the *Child Abduction and Prevention Act* and is scheduled to be considered by the US House on Wednesday, March 26.

THE US HOUSE IS EXPECTED TO CONSIDER THE 'KEEPING CHILDREN AND FAMILIES SAFE ACT OF 2003'

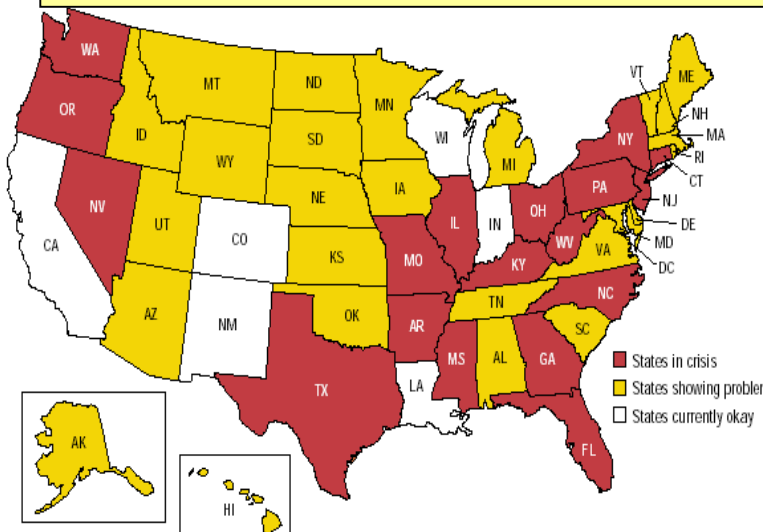
The legislation authorizes \$120 million for the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act, which was originally established in 1974. The bill will help keep children safer by increasing oversight and training of child protective service workers. It also promotes partnerships between child protective services and community-based organizations to provide child abuse and neglect prevention and treatment services.

Did you know...

Families without health insurance risk losing their entire life savings should they be faced with a serious illness.

- In Washington State alone, over 648,000 individuals do not have health insurance.
- The majority of uninsured Americans have jobs, but they are either self-employed or work for employers that cannot afford to offer health insurance.
- Only ½ of workers in firms with fewer than 10 employees have coverage, compared to 80 percent of those who work in large firms.
- 86 percent of small business employers support tax credits they could use for health insurance for low wage workers, the workers who need it most.

To help make health insurance more accessible to individuals who work for small businesses, Jennifer has introduced the **“Small Business Health Insurance Affordability Act.”** Her legislation will provide 50 percent tax credits to small businesses that employ 10 or fewer employees. The tax incentive will enable more small businesses to afford to offer health insurance to their employees.



According to the American Medical Association, Washington State is among the states considered to be experiencing a “medical liability crisis.” Exorbitant medical liability premiums in these states are forcing hospitals to close their doors, forcing doctors to stop treating high risk patients and jeopardizing patient access to health care.

The US House recently approved the “HEALTH Act,” which will help control the skyrocketing costs of health care and make quality health care more accessible to Americans by containing exorbitant costs of medical malpractice insurance.

Over the past three decades, the cost of malpractice insurance premiums and deductibles has increased by over 500 percent. Swedish Medical Center in Seattle, for example, recently learned that its insurance deductible will increase from \$2,500 to \$100,000.

These increases are forcing many hospitals around the nation to close their doors and they are forcing doctors to stop treating high risk patients, such as mothers who are experiencing a high risk pregnancy. The HEALTH Act, modeled after a successful law in California, caps non economic damages in medical malpractice lawsuits at \$250,000, while placing no limits on economic damages. It also limits the number of years a patient has to bring a claim before the courts to three years, thus expediting the resolution of claims. The legislation also allows states to make exceptions in cases where gross negligence has occurred.

Summary of Press Releases:

SELECT COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY NAMES MEMBERS TO SUBCOMMITTEES; *US Rep Jennifer Dunn Appointed to Infrastructure and Border Panel*

House Select Committee on Homeland Security Chairman Chris Cox has appointed Congresswoman Jennifer Dunn to the following three subcommittees on the panel; Infrastructure and Border Security; Rules; and Intelligence and Counterterrorism. Congresswoman Dunn was recently named Vice Chair of the new House committee that will oversee establishment of the Department of Homeland Security and make recommendations to Congress about how to keep Americans safe at home and abroad.

US REP JENNIFER DUNN RELEASES STATEMENT ON HOUSE APPROVAL OF TREE FARM LEGISLATION

The US House of Representatives has approved a tax measure that includes Congresswoman Jennifer Dunn's legislation to allow the non-profit Evergreen Forest Trust to issue tax-exempt bonds for the purchase of land for conservation. Following approval of the bill, Congresswoman Dunn released the following statement:

"I am pleased that the US House has approved legislation to allow the Evergreen Forest Trust to purchase land for conservation. While I had hoped for the approval of this legislation before Weyerhaeuser recently identified another buyer for the Snoqualmie Tree Farm, I believe it is important to continue to pursue this important legislation. This is an innovative concept that can be a model for other communities around the nation and potentially for a deal with Hancock.

"I am pleased with this collaborative effort of the Evergreen Forest Trust, my colleagues on the Ways and Means Committee, Weyerhaeuser officials, King County Council Member Rob McKenna, Snoqualmie Mayor Fuzzie Fletcher and hosts of other individuals who have helped to bring this concept one important step closer to fruition. We have proven that diverse groups can come together to accomplish a common goal.

"Passage of this bill today opens doors for similar land acquisition agreements in the Puget Sound region and other areas around the country."